E 187-4 Given by mr Samuel Clap March 30 1792

BY The

GOVERNOUR &

General COURT

Of the COLONY of the Maſſachuſetts Bay;

In New-England.

IT having been a thing too Senſible and Obvious to eſcape the Obſervation of all who are not wholly Strangers in our Iſrael; *that this poor Land has laboured under a long* Series *of Afflictions and Calamities, whereby we have ſuffered ſucceſſively in our precious and pleaſant Things, and have ſeen the Anger of the righteous God againſt us, expreſſed in Characters, which ought to be as* Terrible *as they muſt needs be viſible unto us ; it having alſo, both by the* Teſtimonies *of thoſe, that after the moſt humble and exact Enquiries into the Mind of God, have diſcovered the ſame unto us, and by their own General and Repeated Confeſſions, become undeniable ; That a* Corruption *of Manners attended with Inexcuſable* Degeneracies *and* Apoſtaſies, *found in too many of this People, is the cauſe of that Controverſie, which the God of our Fathers has, for many years been maintaining with us: It being likewiſe at this day, ſuch a* Probation-time *with all* New-England *as this Country has never before ſeen from the firſt Foundation of it, and the Judgments of that Holy God, who hath beheld how incorrigible we have hitherto been under all His Diſpenſations, now arriving to ſuch an Extremity, That* the Ax is laid to the Root of the Trees, *and we are in imminent danger of periſhing, if a ſpeedy REFORMATION of our* Provoking Evils *prevent it not* THIS COURT have therefore thought it needful to præface their other Endeavours for the Publick Welfare, with a very ſolemn Admonition unto this whole People, that they every where give Demonſtrations of a thorough *Repentance*, without which we have little reaſon to hope for any good ſucceſs in our Affairs.

Wherefore it is Ordered, that the *Laws* of this Colony againſt *Vice*, and all ſorts of *Debauchery* and *Prophaneſs* (which *Laws* have too much loſt their edg by the late Interruption of the Government) be now faithfully and Vigorouſly put in Execution ; Particularly the *Laws* againſt *Blaſphemy*, *Curſing*, *Prophane Swearing*, *Lying*, *Unlawful Gaming*, *Sabbath breaking*, *Idleneſs*, *Drunkenneſs*, *Uncleanneſs*, *and all the Enticements*, *and Nurſeries of ſuch Impieties.* Together with all other the wholſome *Laws* and *Orders* agreeable to the preſent Circumſtances of the Country ; by the Execution whereof, we may approve ourſelves *a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

And

And as all Persons are hereby warned to avoid those *Vices* which these *Laws* are designed for the Prevention and Chastisement of (the *Lovers* of, and *Pleaders* for, such Iniquities, being among the principal *Troublers* of their Countrey) So all inferiour *Officers* are enjoyn'd to perform their Duty in finding and bringing out Offenders against the aforesaid *Laws*, and withal to give notice to such Offenders that they must expect the Justice of an *Exemplary Punishment*.

And that no attempt towards *Reformation*, may want that Assistance which all good men will be willing to give thereunto, 'tis hoped that the Ministers of God will to the publick Reading of this *Proclamation*, adjoyn their own fervent Labours, not only for the Rebukeing and Suppressing of those *Provoking Evils*, which are marked for common Hatred: but also to witness against the more *Spiritual Sins*, which fall not so much under the cognizance of Humane *Laws*, namely, such as *Unbelief*, *Worldliness*, *Heresy*, *Pride*, *Wrath*, *Strife*, *Envy*, and the *Neglect* of communion with God, in both Natural and Instituted *Worship*, and the *Contempt* of the *everlasting Gospel*, with a shameful want of due *Family-Instruction*, which are the *Roots of Bitterness* in the midst of us.

Moreover, after the Example of *Pious Rulers* commended in Sacred Writ; the *Churches* every where are hereby advised to give utmost Encouragement unto the Faithful and Watchful *Pastors* of their Souls; to seek (where they *lack*) a full Settlement and Enjoyment of such *Officers*, as the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed for their Edification; to reflect seriously and frequently on their *Covenants*, to sharpen their *Discipline* against those that *walk disorderly*; and immediately to compose their *Differences* and *Contentions* (if *such* there be) whereby any of them may be distempered and enfeebled, that so they may become *Terrible as an Army with Banners*.

Furthermore it is Expected that the several *Towns* within this Jurisdiction do speedily furnish themselves with all fit means for the good *Education of Youth*, and take special care to avoid *Factions* and *Quarrels* in their other *Town Affairs*; and all Plantations are strictly forbidden to continue without the Advantages of having the *Word* of God constantly preacht unto them, or without a Sincere and Active Industry, to obtain the Presence of the Lord Christ in all His blessed *Ordinances*.

And Finally, this whole People are hereby advertised, that if these *Essayes* for an universal Reformation, shall be obstructed (as those in the dayes of the Reforming *Josiah* were) by Mens being *settled on their Lees*, and *hating to be Reformed*, they can reasonably look for no other issue than this, that the jealous God *will punish them yet seven times more for their iniquities*: But, that if the God of Heaven shall grant unto them the Grace to *Remember whence they are fallen, and Repent and do the first Works*, it will give a greater Prospect of *Prosperity*, than can arise from the best *Counsels*, and biggest *Armies*.

The Work of *Reformation* thus *endeavoured*, is now *recommended* unto the blessing of the Almighty, with whom alone it is, to Recover a Backsliding people; perswading our selves, that the Event thereof would be *Salvation nigh unto us, and Glory dwelling in our Land*.

March 13. 168$\frac{9}{90}$

Isaac Addington Secr.

1690
Mar. 13

Evans 530 Ford 159

D.
2-13